

**The Salvation Army.**

From both officers and soldiers, hearty and glowing expressions came for the workers of the Salvation army, their unselfishness, bravery and modest, quiet efficiency, especially at critical moments under fire. In this connection, it is gratifying to note that some of the warmest expressions I heard from commanding generals were their appreciation of the work of the Salvation army.

**The Army Chaplains.**

Those who may have feared that in the number and extent of organizations and movements for the moral care of the army the chaplain would lose something of his prestige and opportunity, need do so no longer. Our chaplains are finding their place, are doing us credit and stand infinitely higher in the army than ever before. Their influence is constantly increasing.

Doubtless this is due to several causes: the deep interest, the fine vision and the high appreciation of General Pershing; the effective organization of the Headquarters Board of Chaplains; the attitude of Secretary Carter of the Y. M. C. A.; but still more to the general quality of the men who have volunteered for this high service.

**Relations With the Y. M. C. A.**

At the headquarters of the Y. M. C. A. the spirit seems to be all that could be asked, and the same is true at the chaplain headquarters. The orders issued by Mr. Carter appear to have accorded every appropriate primacy to the chaplains.

On the whole, the chaplains and Y. M. C. A. workers are working in hearty co-operation, the extent and effectiveness of which is largely determined by the personalities of those concerned. Many ministers of the Y. M. C. A. are performing the duties of chaplains where none have yet been assigned.

**Special Needs of the Chaplain.**

The first of these is adequate equipment. The second is that of transportation facilities. Very often the unit to which the chaplain is assigned is widely dispersed, part at the front and part towards the rear, and occasionally his unit is divided more widely by being billeted in different places. At other times his men may be in the field hospitals at a considerable distance. Not only the chaplains themselves, but their generals, urge strongly the need of cars for the chaplains. They are now obliged to walk many miles, losing much time, unless they can borrow transportation. This difficulty will, of course, be lessened somewhat when the full number of chaplains are available.

**Inadequacy of Number.**

This is a serious difficulty. Many regiments are without adequate service, many localized units are entirely without chaplains and many hospitals unsupplied. Many soldiers have hardly seen or heard of a chaplain.

**Organization.**

The organization at general headquarters is in fine order, with three unusually strong men in Chaplains Brent, Doherty and Moody. Nearly every division now has its divisional chaplain in charge. A school is in operation at headquarters.

**Insignia and Rank.**

There is division of preference and judgment in the use of insignia. Some chaplains still wear the insignia of rank and others have adopted, either by preference or in compliance, the simple use of the cross. I judge that the majority of the chaplains prefer both insignia.

There is, however, no division of opinion as to the proposed measure

for a chaplain's corps with standing as to rank and pay on an equality with the medical corps. On this the interested generals and chaplains, both at headquarters and in the field, are practically unanimous and positive.

Chaplain Brent prepared and requested me to convey the following: "To the War Time Commission of the Churches:

"The opportunity of the chaplain in the American Expeditionary Forces is unprecedented in military history. The best manhood of America is his to guide, inspire and mould. It has been a common complaint in parochial life that men do not form a prominent element in the average congregation. No such complaint can be made in the army. Again our soldiers are in a temper of mind to welcome greedily the truth of God from the hearts of true men. They are at the most receptive moment of their lives. They are quick to detect and spurn unreality and sham. They are in search of and responsive to what is real.

"The religious to-morrow of America lies latent in the soldiers of to-day, and it is the responsibility of the chaplain to shape it so that the kingdom of God will enter into American life with power. Already there is springing up among the chaplains a sense of brotherhood resulting from personal fellowship. It does not mean the breaking down of personal convictions but rather the giving of due respect to the honest convictions of others. Mutual understanding is the first step towards unity.

"The chaplain comes with two commissions—that of the Church which provides him with power from on high; that from the nation which indicates his sphere of duty. He is simply a minister of God working in military conditions. He is always and everywhere the spiritual general of the army and his insignia perpetually proclaim it.

"If the chaplain of the American Expeditionary Forces works in the uplands of opportunity, he also works in a furnace of temptations and difficulties. The strain will be constant and, in both front line and back areas, terrific. Facilities for movement will be restricted owing to the insufficient transportation of the army. Problems of moral and spiritual character will thicken daily. Endurance will be tested to the limit. Only strong men reinforced by an Almighty God can meet the demands of the emergency.

"We, upon whom has fallen the responsibility of organizing and directing the religious leaders of the American Expeditionary Forces, are wholly dependent on the churches of America for the character and the number of those who come to us. We beg of you to think only of one thing—the choicest manhood of our nation is in France or headed towards France under the domination of the spirit of self-sacrifice. The strongest and best men in the ministry are not too good to serve them. It would be a crime to send weaklings or incompetents to so sublime and so difficult a task. Give us your best and give them properly.

"(Signed) C. H. Brent,

"Senior Chaplain G. H. Q.,

"A. E. F."

19 August, 1918.

As I left general headquarters General Pershing handed me an appreciative and stirring message to the American churches, which set forth the splendid ideals which he holds up before the American army in France, and I left him with a feeling of confidence and hope.



OPENING OF A Y. M. C. A. HUT FOR AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE.

More than six hundred buildings in France are now in use by the American Y. M. C. A. secretaries in their work of ministry to American soldiers and sailors. These buildings include cafes, hotels, dug-outs, tents and ruins, as well as the hundreds of buildings especially constructed for this work. The buildings are crowded, frequently almost to suffocation, by the American troops whenever their official duties permit their attendance. Mr. Francis B. Sayre, son-in-law of President Wilson, who for a number of months was one of the overseas Red Triangle secretaries, gives this description of one of these huts: "The hut usually contains a 'canteen-room,' a large lecture hall, and a number of smaller rooms for classes and group meetings. The canteen-room, a large lounging place, fitted up with board benches and tables, decorated with gay bunting or bright pictures of home life, or possibly with wall-paintings done by some soldier decorator, is usually thronged with troops at every hour of the day when soldiers can be found off duty; for it is generally the only place in camp where soldiers can gather for recreational or social purposes. At one end, by the canteen counter, lined up to get their hot coffee, their buns, crackers, sweet chocolate, sandwiches, or the like, are crowds of soldiers; others are sitting at the tables, writing letters home on the stationery furnished them; still others are at the other end of the room, gathered around the piano or victrola, playing the tunes they used to play at home; many are reading the home newspapers and magazines which are given out at the counter, or selecting books from the library, or matching their

wits in friendly games of checkers. In another part of the hut is a large lecture-room with a stage at one end; here are given in the evenings educational lectures, soldier minstrel shows, musical entertainments, cinema shows, patriotic addresses and religious talks; and here, too, are generally held the Sunday religious services and meetings. Scarcely an evening goes by that does not see these halls packed to the doors. I have seen them so crowded, on the occasion of some stirring religious talk, that after the benches were all filled and the standing-room taken, soldiers kept crowding in through the windows to sit on the floor of the platform, and others remained standing outside to listen to the speaker through the windows. Surging in and out of the thirty huts in one of these base camps there pass daily actually sixty thousand men of every race and creed; every night between ten and fifteen thousand men are listening to educational lectures and entertainments; on two nights every week a like number are crowding to hear religious talks."



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The General Assembly said (at Birmingham) "That the Sabbath nearest to Christmas of each year be set apart to be observed by our Sunday Schools in the interest of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief." (At Durant): "That so far as practicable our Committee's arrangement of the Christmas program be used in our Sabbath Schools."

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